

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

1976: 01

S E M I N A R

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT: THE CAUSES AND THE CONSEQUENCES

Transcript of papers delivered  
at the Seminar and the  
resolutions adopted.

Seminar date: 3rd December, 1976

Location: Janet Clarke Hall,  
University of  
Melbourne.

N.Y.C.A.  
23 Clarendon Street,  
East Melbourne,  
Victoria, 3002.

209/77

Youth - Employment

1976: 01

In talking about action strategies for employment and unemployment, I wish to

FIRSTLY, recognise the interdependent relationship between employment and unemployment issues and the fact that policies affecting the unemployed affect the employed.

SECONDLY, recognise that views on employment and unemployment differ. Some believe in full employment while others believe in full unemployment and still others believe in unemployment as necessary and inherent.

THIRDLY, argue that we need to be quite precise in our definitions, concepts, and assumptions and recognise that much of the ambivalence and confusion in discussions about unemployment lies in the failure of participants to recognise competing ideological differences.

FINALLY, argue that policies and actions emerge from implicit and explicit ideologies and need to be considered as the logical outcome of these ideologies.

A fundamental prerequisite is the need to develop a theory of employment and unemployment. Otherwise, our subsequent action strategies will be incoherent and incomplete. Action for action's sake is destructive activism. At the same time, mere talking is an equally destructive verbalism. There is a need then for action and reflection. Action that is based on analysis and action that is changed and based on subsequent and ongoing analysis.

Conferences are an essential part of an action strategy, but they are a part of that strategy and should not be ends in themselves.

This is one of many conferences convened to discuss unemployment and the unemployed. We are in danger of talking so much about the issue that we mistake talking for solving. This is a real problem that does and could occur. There are too many conferences at which issues are rhetorically confronted and then the conferees escape to passivism and inactivity. Conferences can, in fact, be an exercise in social control - issues are diverted and defused by rhetoric, complexity and ambiguity.

Conferences have the potential, however, to expose contradictions and positions. The challenge for this conference and any conference is to relate the short-term to the long-term, the micro to the macro, the trivial to the substantial, the practice to the theory and the hopes to the reality.

This year I have attended several conferences on unemployment and the unemployed, and perhaps I could share with you what I see to be the collective limitations of these conferences. These limitations were in the process of commission and omission and how each conference ignored the need to identify and define individual and collective values and beliefs and the assumptions, definitions and concepts that proceed from these.

At any typical conference most of the scheduled speakers and audience participants will be implicit rather than explicit, vague rather than specific, and evasive rather than precise.

Speakers assume the desirability and the possibility of full employment without defining full employment and assume the desirability and possibility of the right to work without asking whether or not people also have a right not to work. Speakers assume the desirability and possibility of continued economic growth and increasing productivity without questioning the nature of growth and the worth of productivity. Speakers assume the need to adapt the labour force to a changed and changing society without questioning the significance and desirability of these changes.

While there are substantive ideas, there are peripheral strategies. What the speakers and the conference do not do is:

FIRSTLY, define the meaning of concepts such as full employment, the right to work, underemployment and the dual labour market.

SECONDLY, define long term goals for the development of society and relate these long term goals to the present.

THIRDLY, establish short-term goals that will facilitate these long-term goals.

FINALLY, develop an ongoing critique by which short-term goals can be evaluated against the long-term goals.

At a recent conference, convened by the Labour Resource Centre in Melbourne, a succession of socialist speakers alluded to and accepted the long-term goal of socialism, but confined themselves to discussing the short-term goals of humanising capitalism and, presumably, expecting the exposure of contradictions that would lead to either the gradual transformation or revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. By this process long-term goals are submerged in the short-term. The problem is that unless long-term and short-term goals are openly revealed and explicitly discussed then the proponents of these long-term goals are open to the charge of opportunism and susceptible to pursuing short-term goals that negate long-term goals. Unless the critique and the relationship between short-term and long-term goals is constantly maintained on an open and explicit level then how is it possible to evaluate short-term goals in terms of long-term objectives? Quite obviously, it is not possible.

This leads me to ask why long-term goals are submerged and the reasons seem to be quite diverse:

FIRSTLY there is the expectation and fear of alienating supporters of short-term goals.

SECONDLY there is the expectation and fear that while people can understand short-term goals they can not understand long-term goals.

THIRDLY there is an incomplete understanding of what exactly those long-term goals are except as slogans such as laissez-faire and socialism.

FOURTHLY there is an inability and unwillingness to relate short-term goals to long-term goals.

FIFTHLY there is an inability to conceptualise the transition from a short-term to a long-term goal.'

FINALLY there is an emphasis on pragmatism and ends rather than process. (1)

### UNEMPLOYMENT OR THE UNEMPLOYED

Action strategies for employment and unemployment could have the alternative basis of either emphasising the victims or causes of unemployment. The focus, then, is either on unemployment or the unemployed.

The argument for focusing on unemployment is that we need to understand why people are unemployed and that an emphasis on the unemployed diverts attention from causes to symptoms. Focusing on the unemployed does tend to individualise unemployment as a problem of unemployed individuals.

An exclusive focus on unemployment, however, has the danger of neglecting the real personal hardship of the unemployed and discarding the unemployed as objects rather than subjects. It is ironic if those who seek to humanise the world help dehumanise some of its primary victims.

An appropriate response would I suggest involve a twofold response of equally focusing on unemployment and the unemployed.

This would need to recognise, however that the issue is unemployment and not the unemployed.

### THE UNEMPLOYED

While unemployment has escalated, some of the unemployed are collectively doing something about their situation.

In Victoria this shift has had two phases. Unemployed individuals have joined together to establish unemployed self-help groups. These unemployed self-help groups have subsequently joined together to form a Victorian Federation of Unemployed Self-Help Groups.

This shift from individual action to collective action is significant. The shift is from isolated efforts of individuals to find jobs and help themselves to recognising the commonality of their situation and that by acting together (collectively) they may help themselves more effectively.

In theory, the unemployed helping themselves means the virtual exclusion of the employed. In practice, the employed are necessary to the unemployed and this involves a series of inter-related variables.

ONE the unemployed need leadership in the sense that a few of the employed and a few of the unemployed see the necessity of collective action - economic, political and social. The longevity of this leadership is irrelevant for the initial leaders can create appropriate circumstances for new and ongoing leaders.

TWO the unemployed need to recognise the need for leaders to act and speak on their behalf otherwise unemployed self-help groups will become victims of the tyranny of structurlessness.

THREE the unemployed need to ensure that these leaders are accountable to them, are recallable and dismissable and can give no commitments without consultation.

FOUR the unemployed need to organise around concrete, specific and tangible issues and sustained organising depends on perceived consequences and achievements.

FIVE the unemployed need resources and support of community agencies and professionals.

SIX the unemployed need to accept the value of the expertise and experience of the professionals.

SEVEN the professionals will need to accept the right of the unemployed to make their own decisions.

While participation is a learnt experience, there is no guarantee that the lessons drawn from the experience will be the same. Nonetheless, it is possible to say that in Victoria what the unemployed self-help groups have already learnt is:

1. The value of collective action over individual action.
2. The value of planning and persistence.
3. The power of the unemployed to provoke response and achieve change.
4. The limitations of the unemployed in provoking response and achieving change.
5. The exclusiveness and vulnerability of the political system.
6. The difficulties of organising the unemployed.

Organising the unemployed is, however, fraught with complexities. Historically the evidence is that the unemployed have had a significant but limited impact on the political and economic system.

Before committing resources to the organisation of the unemployed, it would seem necessary to understand the limitations and the causes of these limitations.

FIRSTLY, the majority of the unemployed are a transient group. While the length of time of being unemployed has increased since 1972, the majority of the unemployed do find jobs eventually.

The status of being unemployed is short-term and temporary as opposed to the long-term and permanent status of being handicapped, an Aboriginal or a Migrant.

SECONDLY, many of those professionals involved in helping the unemployed are concerned with maintaining the status quo and preventing criticism of the economic and political system and diverting the unemployed. Many social workers, welfare agencies and youth organisations profit from the needs of the unemployed.

THIRDLY, there is a suspicion that the unemployed themselves could be, are and willingly become diverted into concentrating on the unemployed and the situation of unemployed individuals, rather than on unemployment and the political and economic system that causes unemployment.

FOURTHLY, employers and governments have used the unemployed against the employed. Unions have been accused of pricing themselves and the unemployed out of jobs. Some of the unemployed have been exploited and employed in jobs on under award rates under the rubric of work experience.

FINALLY, there is the opposition of trade unions and trade union leaders who are opposed to the reestablishment and development of a grass roots movement that could threaten their control and their hegemony. (2)

Despite these limitations, I believe that some of the unemployed, in Victoria at least, have had and are having a significant impact on government and community policy making.

The Victorian Federation of Unemployed Self-Help Groups was established in October 1976. The federation meets fortnightly as a general council at which participating groups send as many delegates as are interested and they can afford. Participating groups include:

- Youth Employment Agency, Albury-Wodonga
- Peninsula Action Committee for Employment, Frankston
- Youth Organisation for the Unemployed, Fitzroy
- Reverse Unemployment in Newport, Newport
- Welfare Rights, Fottscray
- Preston Employment Action Group, Preston
- Self-Help Employment Exchange, Malvern-Oakleigh
- Job Shop - Shepparton
- Ballarat Unemployment Group, Ballarat
- SLEOS, Ringwood
- Community Action Group for Employment Opportunities, Hamilton
- Geelong YCW Unemployment Group, Geelong.

The federation has two delegates on a State Government Standing Committee on Youth Unemployment. A four page tabloid guide on unemployment has been produced for school leavers. After an initial print run of 13,000 a further 33,000 copies have been printed. A one day conference for unemployed self-help groups is to be held on December 15th. A representative met for eight minutes with the

Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Mr. Street. A submission is being prepared for the C.E.S. review. (3)

## UNEMPLOYMENT

For our purposes, let us assume that in the debate about unemployment there are perhaps three broad perspectives:

THE SOCIALIST perspective that sees unemployment as inevitable in a capitalist society and the elimination of unemployment as dependent on the abolition of capitalism.

THE LIBERAL perspective that does not see unemployment as inevitable to a capitalist society but as being eliminated through a reorganisation of capitalist society.

THE CONSERVATIVE perspective that sees unemployment as inevitable and normal and accepts that there is a natural rate of unemployment.

Unfortunately, socialists, liberals and conservatives uniformly refuse to separate their ideological perspectives from objective facts. It is only on the basis of these objective facts that discussion about unemployment is necessary. Otherwise we are playing games with ourselves and the unemployed - games that have serious consequences.

## FULL EMPLOYMENT

While there is a commitment to the notion of full employment, there is not a commitment to the fact of full employment. While full employment is regarded as desirable, few would not have reservations about the absoluteness and possibility of this desire.

I would argue that we have never experienced full employment and that arguments that Australia experienced full employment in the 1950's-1960's are based on official rather than real statistics.

There is a need to distinguish between the official unemployment rate and the real unemployment rate.

The official unemployment rate is based on those unemployed and actively looking for work and this gives us the present unemployment rate of 280,000. If, however, you add those persons who want to work but are not included in the official unemployment rate because they have stopped actively looking for work then you have an approximate present real unemployment rate of 500,000.

Economists and governments are, in fact, wary of defining full employment. Full employment tends to be defined on an historical basis and for Australia this means an unemployment rate of 1% to 1.5%. However, in the United States of America full employment is defined as a 4% unemployment rate. The Institute of Public Affairs has suggested that for the future full employment in Australia should be defined as a 3% unemployment rate.

## THE NATURAL RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

It needs to be recognised that until recently unemployment was considered a natural phenomena - it was regarded as inevitable, desirable and unavoidable. Unemployment was seen to be either the fate of the misfits or the punishment that society paid for economic and political stability.

It is the unemployed, of course, who bear the consequences of these views.

It is further complicated by the fact that if unemployment is too extensive and the unemployed are too organised then economic and political stability could be endangered.

There are two broad views of the natural rate of unemployment:

ONE There is the view that there is an ongoing permanent unemployment rate. This assumes that some unemployment is necessary because the economy cannot sustain full employment.

TWO There is the view that there is a temporary and recurring unemployment rate. This assumes that some unemployment is necessary from time to time because the economy cannot continuously sustain full employment.

## UPWARD DRIFT

There has been an upward drift in the unemployment rate. The aboriginal employment rate is 50%. The most dramatic upward drift has been for young persons. The unemployment rate for young persons is increasing by about 1% each year.

- although young persons under 20 years of age represent only 12% of the labour force, they comprise 36% of the unemployed.
- There are 30 unemployed young people for each job vacancy registered with the C.E.S.
- The unemployment rate in the under 20 age group is more than four times the rate for those aged 20 and over.
- In country areas youth unemployment is at nearly 16% compared to under 12% in capital cities.
- The unemployment rate for male teenage migrants is significantly higher than for Australian-born male teenagers.

## JOB SHORTAGE

There is a shortage of jobs.

Approximately half of the available job vacancies are registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service. The Australian Bureau of



Statistics has conducted three job vacancy surveys throughout Australia in March 1974, March 1975, and March 1976. Included in the survey results are vacancies for all categories of employees, including managerial, full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary and seasonal employees; and adults; juniors; trainees; apprentices; cadets etc. Private employers not subject to payroll tax are excluded from the survey.

The Bureau estimates differ from the number of vacancies registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service at the end of March.

#### JOB VACANCIES - AUSTRALIA

	March 1974	March 1975	March 1976
C.E.S.	85,348	32,915	22,976
A.B.S.	165,200	55,200	45,700
Registered Unemployed	82,562	267,817	268,900

Despite these facts, employers persist in arguing that they cannot fill vacancies.

Why ?

Well, there are some vacancies and employers do have trouble filling these vacancies.

Why ?

Some 27% of the Australian workforce change their jobs within the course of a year. Job changing occurs irrespective of the level of unemployment. Workers die, retire, leave their jobs and are dismissed. Approximately 72% of those workers who change their jobs do so without experiencing unemployment. The remaining 28% or 8% of the workforce, do experience unemployment. Workforce turnover varies according to the industry and the occupation. The highest turnover is the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in construction and manufacturing. Turnover rates can be as high as 134%. There is a reduction in turnover rates proportionate to an increase in unemployment but the relative industrial and occupational differences remain. According to the Victorian Chamber of Manufacturers employers reject approximately 40% of workers because the workers are too young, too old, under qualified, over qualified and lacking in experience. Employers reject a further 10% to 20% of workers as non-performers and marginal workers because the workers lack a consistent job history.

#### EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED

What needs to be recognised is the commonality of needs of the unemployed and the employed. For too long the unemployed have been automatically and unthinkingly discarded from membership of unions.

Unions need to recognise that unemployed union members should be allowed to continue as members of unions. There is no more effective way to alienate the unemployed from unions than to deny them membership and accusations, while correct, that the unemployed have been used against the employed are somewhat querulous when the unions themselves have ignored the unemployed. Union members who become unemployed should remain members of unions.

There is an argument that the hardest to place unemployed are the most unreliable, unpunctual and unemployable workers. A corollary argument is that the hardest to fill vacancies are the most undesirable, unsatisfactory and unstimulating jobs. Problem workers could be problem jobs. Employers argue that some workers and many of the unemployed have behavior problems. While not wishing to argue against the fact of behavior problems, I would ask whether or not these behavior patterns of the unemployed are a coping response to the organisational context of their jobs. The truth is that there are some unemployed people who refuse to accept jobs because they consider the wages too low, because they consider the conditions too poor and because they prefer no job to any job.

A full employment policy that results in under-employment is a questionable achievement. Yet, this is the consequence of an irrational application of full employment and the right to work - without asking employment and work for what and for whom. There are workers who are poor - despite the fact that they work.

What I have attempted to indicate is that in order to understand unemployment we need to be quite precise about what we are talking about. (4)

These are the long term issues that we face in discussing unemployment and employment:

Is full employment possible in a capitalist system ?

Is full unemployment an alternative to full employment ?

Do the unemployed have a right to work ?

Do the unemployed have a right not to work ?

Do we need to separate the obligation to work from the individual job opportunities to fulfill this obligation ?

Could 20% of the population support themselves and the other 80%

Will increasing productivity and economic growth eliminate or perpetuate poverty and unemployment ?

Should there be a guaranteed minimum income paid to all irrespective of whether or not they wanted to work ?

Is there, as a result of automation, a shrinkage in the total number of jobs ? (5)

## SHORT-TERM

What about the short-term ?

For the short-term, I have three major suggestions:

FIRSTLY, funding for unemployed self-help groups.

SECONDLY, increased income support for the unemployed.

THIRDLY, the introduction of a job creation program.

There is a hidden agenda behind the Commonwealth Government's Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS) and I wish to identify, define and discuss this agenda. These issues are 'the right to define' and 'the right to work'.

The fact that the Government has introduced the Community Youth Service scheme reflects:

- a. the effectiveness of existing self-help groups.
- b. the extent of community pressure for government action.
- c. the seriousness of the unemployment situation.
- d. the increasing realisation of the seriousness of this situation.

The significance of self-help groups lies in their attempt to provide a different motivation, a different definition and a different structure to the problem of unemployment and the situation of unemployed people.

It would not matter what restrictions the Government attempted to impose, what does matter is that the Government is attempting to impose restrictions. What this does betray is that the Government intends to use and exploit self-help groups to provide functions that it itself cannot provide adequately, but functions that are relatively safe and harmless.

## THE RIGHT TO DEFINE

FREIRE distinguishes between people as SUBJECTS and OBJECTS.

SUBJECTS are people who know and act.

OBJECTS are people who are acted upon.

The unemployed are SUBJECTS when they decide for themselves and act for themselves. The unemployed are OBJECTS when they are told what they can do for themselves.

I would argue that CYSS Scheme regards the unemployed as OBJECTS - people to be acted upon.

In refusing to fund job creation and job placement and to fund unemployed self help groups the Government is denying the right of self-help groups to define for themselves what they may wish to do.

Self-help is acceptable provided it does not involve job creation and job placement. If self-help groups wish to be involved in job creation and job placement then the Government should not prevent groups from helping themselves in a way that they choose to help themselves.

To allow and fund groups for job placement and job creation would :

HIGHLIGHT the inefficiency of the C.E.S.

ILLUSTRATE the inadequacy of C.E.S. resources.

FOCUS on the right to work, and the right to work as an issue.

### THE RIGHT TO WORK

The significance of groups that are involved in job placement and job creation lies not so much in these particular activities but rather in the inherent affirmation of the right to work. To shift the focus to maintaining the skills and motivation of the unemployed is to shift the emphasis from the right to work to accepting the inevitability of unemployment. It endorses the attempt of the Government to help the unemployed in their unemployment and thereby divert attention from causes of unemployment to symptoms. Those who wish to work have a right to work and in emphasising job creation and job placement the self-help groups are affirming this right.

There are other reasons why the Government Department of Employment and Industrial Relations want self-help groups to give up job placement and job creation.

- BECAUSE the self-help groups are seen to be job amateurs inexperienced and inexperienced.
- BECAUSE the C.E.S. regards itself and the private employment agencies as job professionals - experienced and expert.
- BECAUSE The C.E.S. wants to register all of the unemployed and all vacancies.
- BECAUSE The C.E.S. wants a marriage between itself and self-help groups - allowing the self help groups to establish contact with unemployed youth and channelling them, wherever possible, into the C.E.S.
- BECAUSE The self- help groups are seen as competing with the C.E.S. in the area of unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

A majority of the self-help groups began and continue with job placement activities:

- BECAUSE most of the unemployed want jobs.
- BECAUSE some of the unemployed, while refusing to register with the C.E.S. will register with a self-help group.
- BECAUSE 50% of jobs are not registered with the C.E.S.

- BECAUSE some employers are not satisfied with the C.E.S. as a placement service and will register jobs with a self-help group.
- BECAUSE through the work test the C.E.S. acts as a job cop.
- BECAUSE Self-help groups do not work-test the unemployed.
- BECAUSE self-help groups are free of bureaucratic red-tape. (6)

The federation does not accept the inevitability of unemployment and sees CYSS as an attempt to condition the unemployed and the employed to accept the inevitability of higher levels of unemployment.

CYSS has several divisive consequences which seem to be based on the old maxim of divide and conquer:

FIRSTLY, it divides the unemployed by providing funds for youth unemployment and not for the unemployed. Yet, approximately 60% of the unemployed are adults.

SECONDLY, it divides the unemployed from the employed by encouraging voluntary work. Voluntary work is important but it should not be provided as an attempt to displace union workers.

THIRDLY, it divides the unemployed self-help groups from established voluntary organisations who are best able to take advantage of the scheme - possibly at the expense of self-help groups.

CYSS is a short-term response to a long term problem.

It could only succeed if there were jobs for participants at the end of each funded program. Yet, the economists are arguing that there will be a shortage of jobs throughout next year.

#### INCOME SUPPORT

If jobs are unavailable and training is inappropriate, the unemployed have a right to unemployment benefit. Unemployment benefit is, however, below the poverty line and this is whether you are a suspect single person, an obviously deserving standard family of four or a permissive family of eight or more. Quite obviously, then, unemployment benefit should be increased to above the poverty line.

How far above the poverty line ?

Unemployment benefit should be increased to 120% of the poverty line. The reason for this is found in the work of the poverty inquiry. The poverty inquiry has provided us with two groups of poor - the very poor and the rather poor. The poverty line of the poverty inquiry is based on the very poor. But, the poverty inquiry itself has admitted that both the very poor and the rather poor are poor. The very poor are those whose income is below the poverty line. The rather poor are those whose income is between 100% and 120% of the poverty line. On this basis I would argue that pensions and benefits should be increased to 120% of the poverty line.

There are other adjustments that can be made to existing income support schemes. Allowable income for the unemployed should be increased from \$6 to \$20. \$6 is a work disincentive and does not encourage the unemployed to obtain casual or part-time work. The waiting period for unemployment benefits should be abolished. There is no waiting period in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. In the U.K., Denmark, Ireland, Belgium and France it is three days or less. Eligibility for unemployment benefits should extend to 14 and 15 year olds. The Government should introduce a national emergency relief scheme. Whatever the level of a pension or a benefit, there will always be a need for emergency relief. Unemployed people appealing against suspension, postponement, cancellation or a variation in their benefit should continue to receive a benefit.

At present, benefit payment ceases for suspected unemployed persons. Significantly, a majority of those who appeal against cessation of payment have their appeal upheld.

#### JOB CREATION

In arguing for the introduction of a job creation scheme I would wish to qualify this by stating:

FIRSTLY, many economists do not regard job creation as a panacea to unemployment but as one of several policy measures that should be used on a selective basis.

SECONDLY, historically, job creation programs have been used to employ a small percentage of the unemployed.

THIRDLY, job creation needs to be integrated with other manpower programs such as training, retraining and pre-training.

FINALLY, the Regional Employment Development Scheme was a job creation program but was only one scheme of many that could have been introduced.

The argument against a public sector job creation program is that it is too expensive. In fact, the cost of job creation programs cannot simply be determined by the funding provided and there are benefits that are not necessarily measurable in terms of income expended and received:

FIRSTLY, there is a need to deduct from the cost of job creation the amount of money saved from not having to pay unemployment benefit.

SECONDLY, there is a need to deduct from the cost of job creation the revenue through direct and indirect taxes.

THIRDLY, there is the need to deduct from the cost of job creation the financial benefit to local communities where job creation programs exist through expenditure for materials and increased purchasing

power in the community.

FOURTHLY, there is the intangible benefit of worthwhile community work that would not otherwise be undertaken.

FIFTHLY, there is the intangible benefit of remotivation on the unemployed worker.

FINALLY, for those employed job creation overcomes the debilitating and destructive impact of being unemployed.

These are the practical consequences of a job creation program. They are not all measurable but their impact is real enough. There are two other inter-related major arguments for a job creation program. They are, firstly, people have a right to work and; secondly government should be the employer of last resort. (7)

#### PEOPLES CHARTER

There is, I suggest, a need for a peoples charter on unemployment and employment - a declaration of rights and demands.

There is a need for a manifesto that provides a radical interpretation of the unemployment and employment situation. A manifesto that is a tangible presentation of concepts, ideas and policies with which people can relate to, build upon and either support or reject.

This peoples charter would need to look at the short-term and the long-term.

The basic underlying principles of the peoples charter could include that:

1. People have a right to work.
2. People have a right to a living wage.
3. People have a right to congenial jobs.
4. Production should be for use and not profit.

The peoples charter could expose and explain:

- a. the myth of the dole bludger.
- b. the myth that workers are pricing themselves and others out of jobs.
- c. the myth that we have a choice between inflation and unemployment.
- d. the myth that the road to recovery is through increased productivity and economic growth.
- e. the myth of full employment.

In its conclusion, the peoples charter could argue:

1. It is the unskilled, the unqualified and untrained - the poor, women, the disabled, migrants, Aborigines and young people - who are most affected by unemployment.
2. They are the most affected because they are the least protected by tradition and legislation, because they are exploited and because they are vulnerable and powerless.
3. Unemployment is not a chance process or a natural process. There are economic and political causes at the local, State, national and international level.
4. A job for all is possible. The difference between a job for most and a job for all is a difference of commitments and priorities.

Establishing alternative commitments and priorities is easier than abandoning established commitments and priorities and the transition from the established to the alternative is a complex, confused and difficult process.

Until we learn to think differently, the unemployed will continue to be the victims of our definitions and concepts and the individual and organisational behavior that logically proceeds from these definitions and concepts.

In conclusion, my argument is this:

FIRSTLY there is a need to openly and precisely define our goals and expectations. To do otherwise is an exercise in manipulation and deceit.

SECONDLY there is a need to develop alternative ideologies and strategies for unemployment and employment - independent of the political parties.

THIRDLY there is a need to encourage the unemployed to become organised in their own right but not at the cost of dividing the unemployed from the employed.

FINALLY there is a need to adopt a twofold critique and strategy directed at unemployment and the unemployed.